PROVINCE OF SASKATCHEWAN

11-12

PLAN FOR 2011-12

MINISTRY OF SOCIAL SERVICES

MINISTRY PLAN FOR 2011-12

Statement from the Minister

As the Minister responsible for Social Services, I am pleased to present the Ministry's Plan for 2011-12. This document identifies how our Ministry's actions support Government's overall direction and budget, the *Saskatchewan Advantage*. The Plan also indicates how we will respond to the **mandate** given to me by the Premier of Saskatchewan.

As Minister, I recognize the challenges faced by our clients. That is why we are finding new and innovative ways to deal as one Government with the complex issues facing Saskatchewan children, youth, and their families.

Our Government is firmly committed to providing supports to Saskatchewan's vulnerable people so they can realize better outcomes and brighter futures. I am confident that our Plan for 2011-12 will help us deliver on that commitment.

The Honourable June Draude
Minister of Social Services

Response to Government Direction

Government's plan for the upcoming year is described in the *Government Direction for 2011-12: The Saskatchewan Advantage*. The 2011-12 Budget supports this plan by maintaining and improving our quality of life through enhanced public services and creating more opportunities for all Saskatchewan citizens. Responsible fiscal management means finding the right balance between debt reduction, tax relief, investing in short-term capital infrastructure projects, and matching program spending to long-term, sustainable revenues.

Meanwhile, Government continues to promote effectiveness and efficiency throughout the public service; is continuing with its four-year plan to reduce Government's footprint; and has adopted a "Lean" culture of continuous improvement in the delivery of programs and services.

Ministry Plans for 2011-12 support the fulfillment of Government's **vision for a secure and prosperous Saskatchewan, leading the country in economic and population growth, while providing opportunity for a high quality of life for all**. Government's goals and priorities for the upcoming year are described in the *Government Direction* document, as well as in each ministry plan.

The Plan for 2011-12 communicates a high-level framework for the Ministry's key activities in the upcoming year. All ministries and agencies will report on results achieved or not yet achieved, in their annual reports, to honour Government's commitment to keep its promises, and to ensure greater transparency and accountability to Saskatchewan people.

Mission Statement

We protect Saskatchewan's vulnerable people and support their inclusion in the province's prosperity.

Strategies and Actions

Government Goal – Economic Growth

Sustain **Economic Growth** for the benefit of Saskatchewan people, ensuring the economy is ready for growth and positioning Saskatchewan to meet the challenges of economic and population growth and development.

Strategy	Key 2011-12 Actions
Increase the housing supply across the entire housing continuum	• Lead the development and implementation of a comprehensive housing strategy that sets out roles and actions for all participants in the housing sector. • Provide financial incentives to municipalities to: ~ increase the supply of affordable rental housing; and, ~ stimulate home ownership opportunities. • Work with the housing sector to assist eligible home buyers to acquire a home through *HeadStart on a Home*. • Improve affordable housing options for low income individuals and families through a multi-year plan to: ~ increase the supply of new affordable rental housing; ~ repair and renovate existing government assisted housing; and, ~ assist low income renters and home owners with health and safety, accessibility, and energy efficiency renovations.
Accelerate transitions into the workforce for those individuals who are able to work and/or achieve independence	• Ensure the ongoing development and monitoring of the Accelerating Connections to Employment initiative that includes increased expectations of clients, expanded face-to-face interviews, and enhanced referrals to Advanced Education, Employment and Immigration. • Ensure working families with low incomes are supported as they transition back to employment and self-sufficiency through the provision of income supplements to: ~ offset child-related costs of working, allowing parents to remain in the workforce through the Saskatchewan Employment Supplement and Child Care Subsidy; and, ~ help cover the cost of quality rental housing for families with low incomes and people with disabilities through the Saskatchewan Rental Housing Supplement.

Government Goal – Security

Secure Saskatchewan as a safe place to live and raise a family where people are confident in their future, ensuring the people of Saskatchewan benefit from the growing economy.

Strategy	Key 2011-12 Actions
Advance the *Saskatchewan Children and Youth Agenda*	• In collaboration with other human service ministries, issue an action plan for the *Saskatchewan Children and Youth Agenda* including a response to the Child Welfare Review Panel's report in the spring of 2011: ~ begin to implement changes for children, youth, and families to support the well-being of children and achieve better outcomes for vulnerable children and youth; and, ~ develop child-focused, multi-ministry performance measures to ensure programs and services are meeting the needs of children and youth.
Initiate fundamental change to the child welfare system	• As a key part of the *Saskatchewan Children and Youth Agenda*: ~ engage and support First Nations and Métis to strengthen their roles in the child welfare system to improve outcomes for children and families; ~ consult with partners and stakeholders to create a transformation plan for child welfare; and, ~ consult stakeholders on legislative changes to *The Child and Family Services Act* and *The Adoption Act*.
Support families to safely care for their children	• Implement an improved assessment tool to more accurately identify families and children most at risk of abuse and neglect. • Develop an intensive family support model to prevent children from coming into care.
Ensure quality of care for children and youth in the care of the Minister	• Support case management capacity for First Nation Child and Family Services Agencies. • Enhance capacity and training for the First Nation Child and Family Services Agencies through support to the First Nations Family and Community Institute. • Improve supports to foster families through ongoing implementation of foster parent training (PRIDE) including the core training and cultural module specific to Saskatchewan First Nations. • Expand the Family Finders program. • Develop new services with community-based organizations (CBOs) to provide therapeutic foster care, visitation, and supervision for children in care.
Provide people with disabilities distinct programs based on impact of disability	• Develop an assessment tool to determine eligibility for the Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability (SAID) program, and apply the tool to Saskatchewan Assistance Program clients who have a significant and enduring disability and are living independently. • Enhance income support under SAID to people with disabilities.

Strategy	Key 2011-12 Actions
Support community inclusion for people with disabilities	• Improve services for people with intellectual disabilities including: ~ expanded residential and day program services; ~ expanded services for people with complex needs; ~ enhanced supports to the Approved Private Service Home sector; ~ implementation of a new CBO day program funding standard based on assessed need; and, ~ implementation of a recruitment and retention strategy for CBOs.
Provide for the basic needs of individuals and families during those times when they cannot support themselves	• Ensure that individuals who need it have access to basic income support. • Index Income Assistance shelter rates to average market rates to assist individuals and families on social assistance to afford basic accommodation. • Ensure that individuals who need it, including children and youth and people with intellectual disabilities, have access to basic residential support.

Government Goal – Promises

Keep Government's **Promises** and fulfill the commitments of the election, operating with integrity and transparency, accountable to the people of Saskatchewan.

Strategy	Key 2011-12 Actions
Adopt and integrate citizen-centred strategies and actions into the delivery of Ministry programs and services	• Continue re-engineering income assistance programs and service delivery guided by a citizen-centred perspective. • Support the Ministry's transformation to a citizen-centred organization through the continued implementation of the Ministry-wide client information management system (Linkin). • Implement Fair Practices training for Ministry employees to support citizen-centred service.
Improve the effectiveness and efficiency of Ministry programs, services, and processes to improve client outcomes and ensure the best use of public funds	• Commence a five-year cycle of systematic core program review to ensure desired client outcomes are achieved. • Apply Lean methods to ensure Ministry programs are delivered in the most efficient manner. • Develop and implement standard CBO contracts to streamline administration and ensure CBO-delivered programs are accountable for dollars and program requirements. • Review and revise housing policies to improve outcomes for tenants and remove barriers to an effective housing continuum.
Foster a culture of leadership where all employees strive for innovation, continuous improvement, and service excellence	• Support employees of the Ministry to further a culture of a high performing organization by: ~ developing and implementing a strategy to improve on our ability to attract and retain high-performing employees; ~ developing and supporting leadership skills; ~ engaging and empowering employees to improve client service; and, ~ aligning organizational performance with individual performance to address strategic priorities.
Create a safe, healthy, and respectful work environment	• Provide support to CBOs and third party service providers to comply with safety legislation in the workplace. • Improve health and safety in the workplace, including use of Workers' Compensation Board and Occupational Health and Safety initiatives, and attendance for Ministry staff to provide quality service for citizens.
Address issues of gender equity in the province	• Work with ministries, Crown Corporations, agencies, and others to identify changes that will make programs and services more responsive to the needs of women.

Strategy	Key 2011-12 Actions
Leverage information technology to support the Ministry's core programs and services	• Ensure information systems support Ministry programs by: ~ implementing the Linkin case management system for Child and Family Services; ~ replacing the Family and Youth Automated Payment System; and, ~ expanding Linkin development to include Income Assistance and Disability Services programs.
Improve service delivery through partnerships with other governments, ministries, and community partners	• Engage a broad range of partners and stakeholders in the design and development of new programs and services for Ministry clients. • Engage other governments through federal, provincial, and territorial mechanisms in support of clients, including: ~ Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) to improve the federal/ provincial cost shared programs; and, ~ provinces, territories, and the federal government in improving policy work in the areas of disability, poverty, children and youth, and women. • Work collaboratively with other ministries and partners to provide leadership to the *Saskatchewan Children and Youth Agenda*.

Performance Measures

Measure	Baseline / Trend Line Information

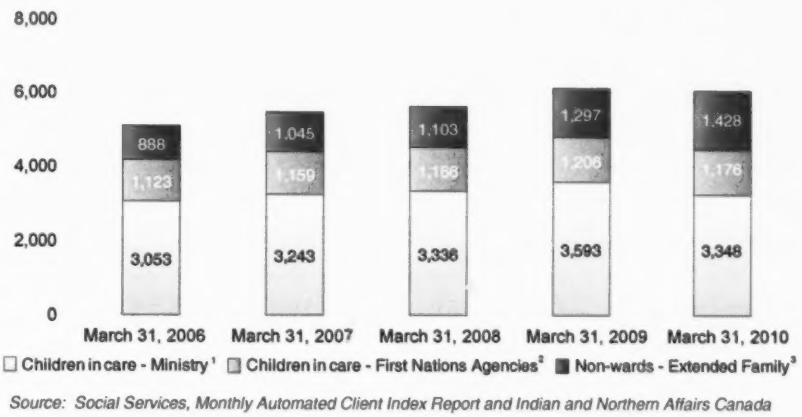
Number of children in care

NOTE: The numbers to the right are the number of active cases on March 31 for each year and include all children in the province who are placed in out-of-home care.

[1]The number of children in care of the Ministry includes all children living in out-of-home care off-reserve as well as those children taken into the care of the Ministry off-reserve and subsequently placed in an out-of-home care resource on-reserve.

[2]The Government has delegated the delivery of service to children living on-reserve to First Nation Child and Family Services Agencies across the province. Statistics related to the number of children taken into care on-reserve are received from Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) each year.

[3]Non-wards are children who have been permanently placed by court order in the custody of extended family members or with other families with whom the child has an existing relationship.



Source: Social Services, Monthly Automated Client Index Report and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada

Measure Description

The Ministry supports families to safely care for their children. Children may be placed in care of the Ministry on a temporary or permanent basis if their parents are unable to care for them. The measure is aligned with the Government of Saskatchewan's goal to create a secure Saskatchewan by ensuring that children are safe.

In Saskatchewan, the vast majority of children coming into care are of Aboriginal background. Some of these children are served by Ministry staff and resources, and others by staff from the First Nation Child and Family Services Agencies. The number of children in care reported in this performance measure includes children on-reserve who are brought into care under First Nation Child and Family Services Agencies as well as the number of children taken into care directly by the First Nation Child and Family Services Agencies.

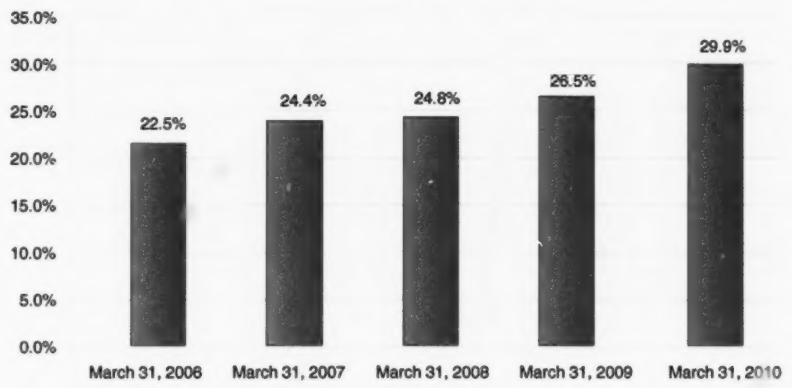
The number of children in care is affected by social conditions and the incidence of problems such as addictions and mental health within families.

Measure	Baseline / Trend Line Information

Proportion of children in care who are non-wards[1]

NOTE: The numbers to the right are the number of active cases on March 31 for each year. They are calculated by dividing the number of non-wards by all children in out-of-home placements.

[1]Non-wards are children who have been permanently placed by court order in the custody of extended family members or with other families with whom the child has an existing relationship.

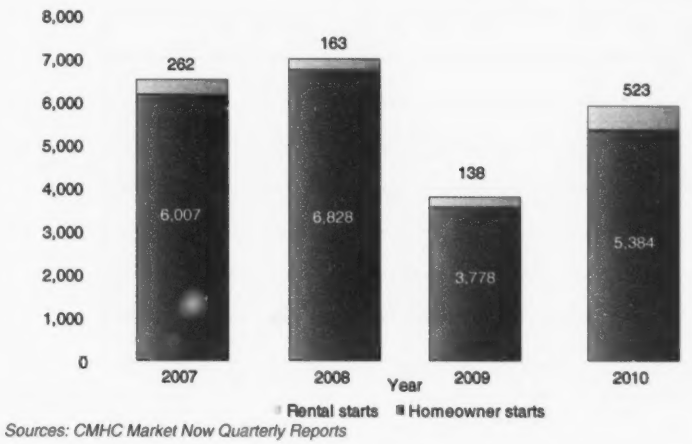
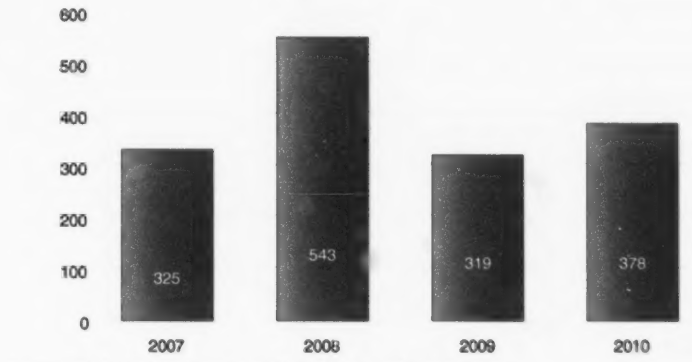


Source: Social Services, Monthly Automated Client Index Report

Measure Description

When children are at risk of maltreatment or neglect, it may be necessary for Child and Family Services staff to find an alternate living arrangement to ensure their safety and well-being. Evidence has shown that, for those children who will not be able to return home, better outcomes occur when they are placed with extended family members or others who have a significant relationship to the child. This measure reflects the success of the Ministry in being able to arrange placements with extended family or others who have a significant relationship to the child. This has been the result of the Ministry allocating dedicated resources to ensure that, where possible, children are permanently connected to families.

The measure is aligned with the Government of Saskatchewan's goal to create a secure Saskatchewan by ensuring that children are safe. The measure does not include children in the care of First Nation Child and Family Services Agencies.

Measure	Baseline / Trend Line Information
Province-wide housing market starts	 *Sources: CMHC Market Now Quarterly Reports*
Saskatchewan Housing Corporation completed housing units	 *Sources: SHC, Housing Program and Service Design Status Report*

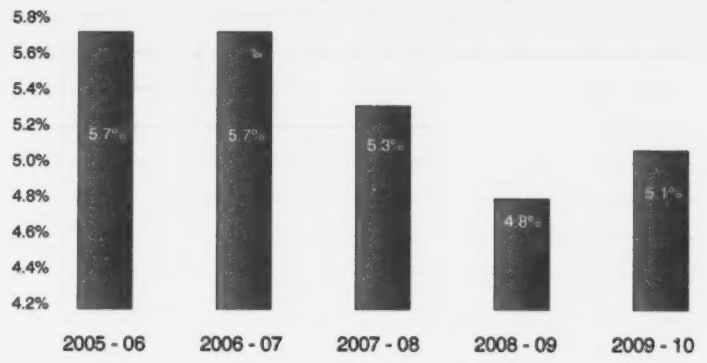
Measure Description

Stable and affordable housing enables people to work, engage in education and skills training opportunities, increase their financial savings, and participate in their community.

These measures provide a comparison of new rental and homeownership starts for the provincial housing market and for low to moderate-income households with financial support from the Saskatchewan Housing Corporation (SHC). The significance of the measures are that they demonstrate the role SHC plays in the development of affordable homeownership and rental units and the increase in housing supply overall. The measures align with the Government of Saskatchewan's goals to create a secure Saskatchewan and support economic growth.

Data presented is for the calendar year, which is consistent with SHC corporate reporting.

Some figures are not identical to those previously provided due to reconciliation of year-end information or changes in the nature of program delivery.

Measure	Baseline / Trend Line Information
Percentage of population 0 to 64 years who receive social assistance	

Source: Social Services, Social Worker Information Network (SWIN) and Saskatchewan Health Covered Population 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008 & 2009

Measure Description

Social assistance dependency reflects the proportion of the population (ages 0 to 64) who depend on social assistance for any or all of their income. This proportion does not include First Nation people residing on-reserve.

The measure illustrates the Ministry's efforts to ensure a secure Saskatchewan that is a safe place to live and raise a family. It also indicates the level of need for basic income for individuals without alternative means of financial support. The Ministry will continue to provide programs, including the Saskatchewan Assistance Program, Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability program, Transitional Employment Allowance, and Seniors Income Plan, to meet the basic income needs of the population.

Over the last five years, the dependency rate has decreased from 5.7 per cent in 2005-06 to 5.1 per cent in 2009-10. Saskatchewan dependency rates remain consistent with the national average from year-to-year.

Social assistance dependency can be affected by both external and internal factors, including the unemployment rate, the state of the economy, and population growth.

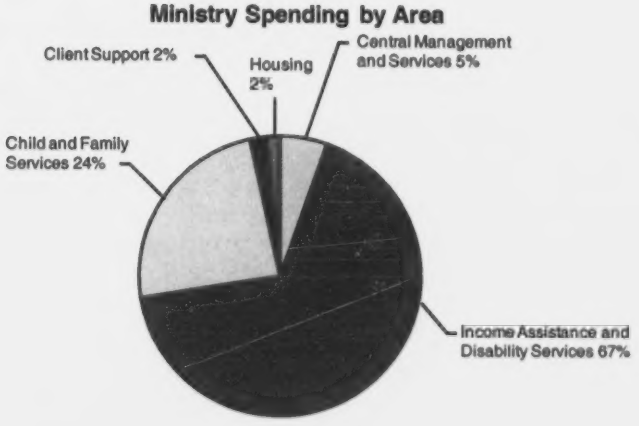
Some figures are not identical to those previously provided due to revisions to the population counts used for these estimates.

Financial Summary

Highlights of Appropriation and Expense 2011-12

2011-12 Estimates	(in thousands of dollars)
Central Management and Services	41,736
Income Assistance and Disability Services	553,782
Child and Family Services	197,833
Client Support	16,904
Housing	12,746
Ministry Appropriation	**823,001**
Capital Asset Acquisitions	10,722
Capital Asset Amortization	1,893
Ministry Expense	**814,172**
FTE Staff Complement	1,895.4

For more information, see the Budget Estimates at: http://www.finance.gov.sk.ca/budget2011-12/


Ministry Spending by Area
Client Support 2%
Housing 2%
Central Management and Services 5%
Child and Family Services 24%
Income Assistance and Disability Services 67%

HIGHLIGHTS

Security and Economic Growth:

In 2011-12, the Ministry of Social Services will continue to support Saskatchewan's most vulnerable citizens, building on the significant progress that has been made and delivering programs and services in the areas of child welfare, housing, income support, and services for those with disabilities.

The Province's 2011-12 Budget includes the first ever *Saskatchewan Children and Youth Agenda* budget, which invests more than $34 million in a new, cross-government approach to the complex issues facing Saskatchewan children, youth, and families. As part of this approach, Social Services will provide $14.45 million to fund areas that have the most urgent need, including the following:

- support First Nations Child and Family Service Agencies to provide better case management for children in the Province's care who are placed on-reserve - $1.5 million;
- develop new services with community-based organizations (CBOs) to provide therapeutic foster care services for children with developmental or behavioural difficulties, as well as home assessments for foster care, extended family placements, and adoptions - $1.25 million;
- develop a 24/7 intensive family support model to prevent children from coming into care by utilizing in-house supports and counseling to help families during critical times such as 3:00 to 11:00 p.m. - $1.0 million;
- add 30 new Full-time Equivalent (FTE) Child Protection Workers to the frontlines in the child welfare system to address immediate pressures in the current system – $0.75 million;
- support the development of CBO-managed visitation, supervision, and transportation supports for children in care with families - $0.5 million;
- consult and plan with First Nations, Métis, and other stakeholders for the next phase of the Ministry's response to the Child Welfare Review Report - $0.4 million;
- increase the capacity of the Family Finders program to find First Nations families for First Nations children in care off-reserve - $0.35 million;
- increase the capacity of the First Nations Family and Community Institute to support capacity building and training for standards and policies in First Nations Child and Family Services Agencies - $0.3 million; and,
- provide new funding for out-of-home residential and extended family care - $8.4 million.

To support those in housing need, the Ministry of Social Services will:

- lead the development and implementation of a comprehensive housing strategy;
- host consultations with key stakeholders, as well as a Housing Summit in April 2011, to contribute to the housing strategy and find solutions to both immediate and future housing needs; and,
- invest in two new housing programs: the Saskatchewan Rental Incentive Program to assist municipalities in their efforts to increase the supply of affordable rental housing in the province - $1.5 million; and provide for the new Saskatchewan Municipal Affordable Homeownership Program - $0.2 million.

The Ministry of Social Services continues to invest in support for people with disabilities and in income assistance programs, and in 2011-12 will:

- continue with the development of the Saskatchewan Assured Income for Disability (SAID) program, including a $50 per month benefit increase beginning in January 2012 for SAID clients in residential care settings - $2.3 million;
- provide additional funding to support people with intellectual and cognitive disabilities who require residential, day, and specialized programs. By the end of 2011-12, services will be in place or in development for 373 people, or 85 per cent, from the waitlist of 440 individuals. The new funding will also expand services to those beyond the original waitlist - $14 million; and,

HIGHLIGHTS (CONT'D)

- provide continued support for people who rely on income assistance by ensuring that funding is adequate to address needs - $27 million increase.

The Ministry will also:

- continue to provide Emergency Social Services for Saskatchewan people in disaster situations, including transportation, shelter, food and clothing, when local community capacity to respond is exceeded; and,
- work across government, with communities and employers towards creating opportunities for women to take full advantage of the jobs and opportunities created by the province's prosperity.

Effectiveness and Efficiency:

In 2011-12, the Ministry of Social Services will:

- provide a 1.5 per cent increase to CBOs to continue to deliver vital services to people throughout the province. This represents a total increase of 14.8 per cent for CBOs over the last four years;
- implement the new automated case management system for Child and Family Services and extend the development of the system to include Income Assistance and Disability Services programs;
- continue re-engineering income assistance programs and service delivery guided by a citizen-centred approach; and,
- begin a systematic review of programs to ensure that desired client outcomes are achieved.

For More Information

Please visit our website at **www.socialservices.gov.sk.ca** for more information on the Ministry's programs and services or phone our Communications Branch at (306) 787-3686.